

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

862



FROM: Executive Office

SUBMITTAL DATE:
January 19, 2007

SUBJECT: 2007 State Legislative Platform

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board approve the 2007 State Legislative Platform and direct the Executive Office and the County's Sacramento representatives to advance the legislative proposals contained here.

BACKGROUND: Each year the Board adopts a State Legislative Platform to guide the legislative advocacy efforts at the State level. While the 2007 State Legislative Platform presents mostly new proposals that have not been included in previous Board approved platforms, several continuing concerns of high interest are also included. Previously approved Board positions from earlier state platforms are still in effect. Due to the dynamic nature of the legislative process, additional State legislative issues of concern to the County will be brought forward to the Board for appropriate action throughout the year as the need arises.

Departmental Concurrence

Attachment

Gary M. Christmas

Gary M. Christmas
Deputy County Executive Officer

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ 0	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$ 0	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$ 0	For Fiscal Year:	N/A
SOURCE OF FUNDS:				Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30 <input type="checkbox"/>
				Requires 4/5 Vote <input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE.

County Executive Office Signature

David M. Cook

David M. Cook

Consent
 Policy
 Consent
 Policy

Dept's Recomm.:
 Per Exec. Ofc.:

WARD 13 V111: 31

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.27 1/31/06

District:

Agenda Number:

3.6

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY
2007
STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**



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ISSUE: Medi-Cal Income Child Care Deductions.

POSITION: Increase allowable income child care deductions for Medi-Cal applicants and recipients. Current deductions were established in 1989 and child care expenses have risen substantially since then.

BACKGROUND: Medi-Cal income child care deductions are currently \$200.00 a month for a child under one year of age, and \$175.00 for a child one year and older. These deductions do not reflect current child care rates.

Child care is frequently a necessary component of employment. Current, outdated child care deductions can be the sole contributing factor keeping families out of the Medi-Cal program and leave those in the program with an overly burdensome share of cost. It can also discourage employment, particularly in two parent households; for fear that increased earnings will not be offset by proper child care deductions.

The intent of the proposal is to allow an increase in child care income deductions to be factored into the Medi-Cal program for working families. Currently one parent of a two parent household may choose not to work for fear that an increase in income may cause the family to lose its Medi-Cal coverage. In this situation, parents would be more likely to gain employment if they knew that there was an income deduction that reflected increased child care expenses. In addition to potentially higher employment rates families would be able to obtain the medical coverage they need. A lower share of cost would increase net income to working California families.

Initially, there may be an increase in Medi-Cal cases, as more clients become eligible. Increases in net family income may encourage both parents to work, increasing the family's likelihood of obtaining employer provided medical insurance. Subsequently, in two parent households there may actually be a long term decrease in the number of Medi-Cal cases.

ISSUE: CalWORKs 100 Hour Rule.

POSITION: Support legislation to eliminate the CalWORKs 100 hour rule at application. Currently, if a married couple applies for CalWORKs assistance, and if the principle wage earner (PWE) in the family works 100 hours or more per month, the case will be denied.

BACKGROUND: The proposal can best be explained by an example: A family of 4, with a father who is working 100 hours per month and earning \$6.75 an hour, mom with little or no work history, applies for CalWORKs assistance. This family would be denied due to the 100 hour rule, even though they would otherwise be eligible to the program. This acts as a disincentive to maximizing employment hours. It also creates a situation that requires clients to start at lower hourly employment level to be eligible to the CalWORKS program, which is a disservice to both the client and Welfare to Work programs, especially in a time limited program environment. (Ironically, a PWE with the same family composition as above, working fewer hours per month may have potential eligibility. Example: A PWE working 80 hours a month earning \$8.50 an hour would not be denied due to the 100 hour rule).

Parents in these financially desperate families may feel the need to live separately to provide some form of economic and medical security for their children. This can be accomplished by the principal wage earner leaving the home, even though the PWE may wish to stay. Although the primary goal in CalWORKS is to temporally assist customers by providing services that will lead to financial independence, a second desirable outcome emphasized in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Reauthorization is to maintain and strengthen the family unit by encouraging fathers to stay in the home.

The intent of this proposal is to encourage maximum employment at the point of entry for the working poor requesting assistance. Other eligibility factors would not be impacted (such as income and asset levels). Allowing these families eligibility would enable CalWORKS services to be offered that may be the stumbling block in these families' paths to financial independence. The goal would be to increase overall family income starting at a higher employment threshold. From this higher point of entry, CalWORKs can assist with informed career guidance and offer opportunities to increase work skills to these families that may allow them to obtain better jobs.

Fiscal impact is considered to be minimal. Most applicants for CalWORKs/TANF are single persons whose eligibility is based on

deprivation due to the absence of a parent. Exact numbers of potentially eligible families are not known, but the number of families denied due to the 100 hour rule is generally assumed to be small. For this newly eligible group of families, grants would be reduced due to their earnings. Additional outlays for child care and other supportive services would be needed.

ISSUE: Modify the Aged and Disabled Federal Poverty Level (A & D FPL) and Medically Needy Programs.

POSITION: Support legislation to amend the A & D FPL and Medically Needy programs to address disproportionate Medi-Cal share of cost increases (based on the FPL) for aged and disabled citizens.

BACKGROUND: Over time Social Security recipients have received minor increases in income for Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) and smaller increases in the FPL. This resulted in smaller increases in Social Security leading to a disproportionate Medi-Cal share of cost increase for persons terminated from the A & D FPL program due to these minor income changes. Adult Services reports clients have declined preventative medical services due to extreme share of cost. These situations can result in a deteriorating health condition that may end in very expensive nursing home care.

Most recent data shows the total number of Riverside County Medi-Cal customers impacted by this change is very small. In January 2006, 7595 aged and disabled persons were in the A & D FPL program, from which 349 persons were terminated in April 2006 and became subject to the higher share of costs. Although the total number of participants impacted may seem small, this change causes extreme fear and stress in the elder and disabled population impacted by this change. Use of expensive nursing facilities by our aged and disabled citizens may be reduced by providing early affordable access to less costly medical alternatives.

ISSUE: Adult Protective Services (APS) Program Funding.

POSITION: Increase state funding for the Adult Protective Services (APS) Program.

BACKGROUND: Funding for APS has remained stagnant since State Fiscal Year 2002/03 even as caseloads have continued to grow. This has created situations where local APS programs are straining to meet the increased demand for services, impacting the health and safety of elderly and dependent adult abuse victims, without a corresponding increase in financial resources.

The intent of this proposal is to receive support from county and state organizations to introduce legislation requesting sufficient funding to enable APS to investigate reports of abuse and neglect. Adequate funding levels will allow for the provision of appropriate and comprehensive services for our growing population of abused and neglected elders and dependent adults.

ISSUE: Abandoned Mobile Home Abatement Trust Fund.

POSITION: Establish a trust fund to assist with the costs of removing abandoned mobile homes.

BACKGROUND: There is a proliferation of abandoned mobile homes along roadways and private properties in Riverside County. Abandoned mobile homes are a safety hazard to area residents and can become attractive nuisances, they are the targets of repeated vandalism and can be used to conceal illegal activities and are an eyesore to the community and contribute to overall lower property values. Riverside County has been targeted as a "dumping ground" for unwanted mobile homes being removed from mobile home parks in neighboring counties. Private property owners where these mobile homes have been abandoned have not granted consent for the placement of the unit on their property. Under current regulations, the County must hold these victimized property owners responsible for the cost of the removal of these abandoned mobile homes.

ISSUE: Penalty Assessments for Infraction/Misdemeanor Illegal Dumping Fines.

POSITION: To establish a 100% penalty assessment to be added to any fines administered by the Superior Court in conjunction with a conviction under Penal Code Section 374.3 to be deposited with the county where the dumping occurred.

BACKGROUND: Illegal dumping is occurring in pandemic proportions throughout the State's rural communities. Illegal dumping on private and public properties is not only a violation of a person's property rights, but is also an example of blatant disregard for the environment and our natural resources.

The intent of this proposal is to apply a penalty assessment for any fines levied by the Superior Court (pursuant to California Penal Code Section 374.3) and direct said funds to the County to be deposited into an illegal dumping fund and direct the County to establish an illegal dumping cost center for the deposit of these penalty assessments. Funds from this cost center would be used to offset costs incurred by the county for the clean-up of illegal dumpsites.

ISSUE: Election Office Satellite Location Notice.

POSITION: Reduce the notice time from 14 days to 48 hours for the establishment of a satellite voting location in response to a county disaster. This will allow elections officials to provide voting in response to a disaster that occurs less than 14 days prior to Election Day.

BACKGROUND: Elections Code §3018 requires a satellite location of the elections office to be noticed at least 14 days prior to voting at the satellite location. This negates the ability to establish a satellite location for a county-disaster area on a very short notice.

The Esperanza Fire devastated the everyday lives of residents in the burn area. The area consisted of mail ballot precincts for the November General Election. However, mail service had ceased and if voters had previously received their ballots, they could not get to their homes to retrieve them. The Registrar of Voters has the capability to send its 32 foot mobile voting site, ROVER, to the disaster areas to allow voters to cast ballots.

ISSUE: Administrative Citation Penalties.

POSITION: Increase the Administrative Citation Penalties to reduce violations of local building and safety codes.

BACKGROUND: Current fines established by Government Code (\$100/\$250/\$500) are viewed as minuscule and do little to deter ordinance violations. Violators often look at this fine schedule as just a "cost of doing business." Administrative citations can be more effect if the consequences of non-compliance are taken more seriously by the cited parties.

Raising the current penalty schedule to (\$100/\$500/\$1000) should in turn raise the level of deterrence and lower the incident level of repeat offenders. This schedule will bring the penalties for violation of county ordinances in line with the penalties allowed for violations of local building and safety codes as provided in Government Code Section 25132 (c).

ISSUE: Reallocation of Unused Funding Generated through the Abandoned Vehicle Abatement (AVA) Service Authority Trust Fund.

POSITION: To have the collected money in the unused AVA funds remain within the County.

BACKGROUND: The guidelines for the AVA program set forth by the California Highway Patrol state that any unused funds at the end of the fiscal year must be returned to the state and that money would be lost, even though the money was collected at the local level. California Vehicle Code Section 9250.7 allows for the suspension of a Service Authority when there is a revenue fee surplus in excess of those allowed under this section; namely, surpluses in an amount that exceeds the amount expended to abate abandoned vehicles in the previous fiscal year. Riverside County and other counties such as Orange County routinely have excess AVA funding at the end of the fiscal year. Surplus funds accumulate in the county's AVA trust fund due to participating cities filing reimbursement requests with their respective County AVA Administrator for funding amounts less than their allotted share of the AVA funding. On the flip side of this issue, certain cities and counties that remove large quantities of abandoned vehicles from their jurisdictions routinely spend more in abatement costs than their share of the service authority allocation.

ISSUE: County/EMS Agency Authority for Ambulance Transportation Services.

POSITION: Preserve County/EMS Agency authority to control EMS system. Support laws and regulations that would enhance County authority, increase funding for such oversight and oppose laws which would decrease County authority.

BACKGROUND: In 1997 the Court decision in the County of San Bernardino v. City of San Bernardino clarified the role of the counties in providing emergency medical services, the League of California Cities and others are still planning to sponsor new law(s), which would cede the counties authority, especially in respect to revising "governance" structures.

SB125 (Garamendi), Chapter 1260, Statutes of 1980 enacted the Emergency Medical Services Act, (Division 2.5 of the Health and Safety Code) which provided for counties to establish the local emergency medical services agency to plan, implement, and evaluate an EMS system. Cities that operated emergency services prior to June 1980 were grandfathered into law. For well over a decade cities have gone before the Legislature to overturn SB125 and obtain authority to establish city managed ambulance service. In a lawsuit that went to the California Supreme Court, it was determined that cities and districts could continue services already provided, but could not expand the scope of services without county approval.

Counties maintain that ambulance service must be provided on a countywide basis to ensure that providing services even in remote areas of the county remains financially viable. Changing the system to jurisdiction by jurisdiction would mean that certain affluent areas would be cherry picked by cities leaving the less affluent areas to the county to provide coverage.

ISSUE: Retain and protect the cost-based reimbursement for Federally Qualified Health Centers, and FQHC Look-A-Likes.

POSITION: Dissuade any restricting on FQHC reimbursements.

BACKGROUND: Services provided to Medi-Cal and Medicare patients, FQHCs and FQHC Look-A-Likes are guaranteed cost-based reimbursement. Although the current system requires prospective payment, it nevertheless assures that these community health centers will receive reimbursement which reflects the actual costs of providing service to these populations. As the Federal and State Budgets come under pressure, there has been some discussion about possibly limiting, or eroding the cost-based payments. The Prospective Payment System (PPS) system already endangers FQHC, because it artificially freezes costs and does not allow for routine inflation of the costs on an annual basis.

Because there has been some discussion about further limiting, or restricting FQHC, any legislative attempt to roll-back FQHC reimbursements should be vigorously opposed. And, conversely, any legislation which further guarantees, and protects the cost-based reimbursement should be supported as a protection of all the safety net providers who have FQHC designations.

ISSUE: Healthy Eating and Active Living.

POSITION: Support legislation that promotes healthy lifestyles including good nutrition, physical activity and healthy community design.

BACKGROUND: The percent of overweight and unfit adults and children has increased significantly in the last three decades. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, poor diet and physical inactivity account for 310,000 – 580,000 deaths each year in the United States. According to 2004 *FITNESS*Gram test scores, 28 percent of Riverside County 5th, 7th, and 9th grade students were classified as overweight. In the Riverside County WIC Program, children ages one to five average 27.9 percent overweight at their most recent visit.

Statistics show that only twenty-five percent of adults get the recommended amount of physical activity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) attribute a sedentary lifestyle, in part, to current land use and transportation patterns.

ISSUE: Health Insurance Coverage for Californians.

POSITION: Support Legislation that simplifies enrollment of Medi-Cal and Healthy Families Programs, particularly for pregnant women and newborn infants; expands eligibility of Medi-Cal and Healthy Families Programs; offers presumptive eligibility for Medi-Cal; allows Counties to draw down Federal Financial Participation (FFP) funds to provide coverage to parents of Healthy Families children; and provide tax credits and other incentives for small employers and low wage workers to offset the cost of offering or paying for health insurance.

BACKGROUND: California's fiscal crisis poses a significant threat to the state's most vulnerable populations including: low income women, children and families, the elderly, and the disabled. The cost of uncompensated care continues to escalate. Without proper insurance coverage, there is no immediate way for the County to control these costs. Many indigents, the working poor and other low-income families use emergency care as their source for medical coverage rather than seeing a doctor early enough to provide prevention care. The only solution to this dilemma is to maximize the insurance coverage for all California residents.

- ISSUE:** Public Health Microbiologist Training.
- POSITION:** Support State Legislation or action that reinstates State support for health laboratory staff trainees, including training of Public Health Microbiologists and Postdoctoral Training for careers as a Laboratory Director.
- BACKGROUND:** For many years the State funded approximately twenty Public Health Microbiologist Trainees each year. By 1995, the number was reduced to zero. As a consequence there is now a serious shortage of certified Public Health Microbiologists in California. Many Public Health Laboratories have not been able to recruit for vacant positions which in some cases have been open for years. The operation of Public Health Laboratories in California has also been complicated by the requirements of Federal law, CLIA 88, and State law which require that the director of a high complexity Public Health Laboratory be a Board certified PhD who is also a certified Public Health Microbiologist. Currently there are numerous vacancies in directorship position throughout the State, and more directors will soon be retiring.
- The Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA) of 1988 resulted from Congressional examination of the quality of laboratory testing including of testing performed in physician's office labs. To address the findings in this investigation, CLIA set standards designed to improve quality in all laboratory testing and includes specifications for quality control, quality assurance, patient test management, personnel and proficiency testing. Unfortunately, these changes have negatively impacted the ability of California to recruit and train adequately qualified microbiologists to work in and to direct the approximately 40 public health laboratories run by local governments throughout the state.

ISSUE: Protect Funding of Public Health and Public Medicine through careful reform of Realignment.

POSITION: Support legislation that improves funding for county health services by assuring a stable and consistent funding stream for Health, Mental Health, and Social Services (IHSS). Also, locate alternate mechanisms to adequately fund IHSS and Foster Care increases, and restore funds lost to health when the MISP program was transferred from the State to the Counties.

BACKGROUND: Realignment issues:

- Adequate replacement funding for Realignment- dedicated Health funding.
- The formula has been static not accounting for changes in other health funding mechanisms, population growth, etc.
- Many counties are either under or over equity (based on percent of poverty/population) and those imbalances are increasing with each passing year, creating “winners and losers” if the formula isn’t addressed.
- 58 counties have spent the funds 58 different ways which was the intent so that the funds could meet individual needs. This has led to some concern that the funds have not been spent appropriately and perhaps diverted to programs not anticipated. (Realignment dollars may only be spent on programs that were funded under AB 8).
- MISP counties were “shorted” millions of dollars with the transfer of the MISP program from the State to the counties in late 1989. This loss was memorialized in the Realignment formula leaving health “permanently” under funded.
- Social Services caseload driven programs have first call on any growth. Foster Care and In Home Supportive Services are diverting funds from the over all funding steam. Caseload growth is appropriate to fund but the Legislature has been using Realignment to fund expansions in scope, COLA's and in rates. These program expansions were not anticipated for the Realignment mechanism and have cut into the capacity for growth in the health Realignment account.

- ISSUE:** Control of Communicable Diseases.
- POSITION:** Support increased State funding for Public Health Programs and legislation that enhances the authority of Public Health Officers to combat and control communicable diseases.
- BACKGROUND:** Local health jurisdictions are the State's partners in the control of communicable diseases. Communicable disease program augmentations are needed in light of new and re-emerging infectious diseases, the most serious of which is avian influenza, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, West Nile Virus (WNV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).
- The re-emergence of syphilis as a public health concern highlights the importance of addressing Hepatitis C and HIV infection so that appropriate interventions can be taken.
- The Public Health Improvement Act of 1999 (Chapter 797) was intended to increase the basic funding allotment to local health jurisdictions for core public health functions in order to control the spread of communicable diseases. However, during each budget cycle since enactment of the law, sufficient funds for the program have not been appropriated.

ISSUE: Pediatric Immunization Programs.

POSITION: Increase funding for pediatric immunization programs, support the one-time funding for infrastructure support for the California Statewide Immunization Information System (SIIS), and support efforts to increase the number of U.S. manufacturers producing influenza and other crucial vaccines.

BACKGROUND: Currently, one in five children under the age of two in California are not up-to-date on their routine immunizations, leaving them vulnerable to serious disease. Only 73% of children in California are appropriately immunized by age two years as compared to the Healthy People 2010 objective of 90%.

The 2004 California Performance Review report states that, "California has an opportunity to prevent disease in children while saving money for taxpayers and the private sector by providing a web-based centralized statewide immunization registry for children to prevent disease and save taxpayer and private sector money."

California stands to save \$32.5 million per year in current costs for: manual immunization record pulls by health care providers, schools, daycare, and HEDIS; duplicative shots; reduced illness; and time lost from work by parents. To receive the full benefit of cost savings, California Statewide Immunization Information System, (SIIS) must be able to expand and sustain this important health infrastructure. The federal government's goal is that 95% of children under age six have their immunization histories in a fully functional state registry by 2010. However, only about 20% of our young children in California have immunization histories in the SIIS registries

All fifty states are developing registries and a number – including Michigan, Florida, Illinois, Oregon, Arizona and Washington – are already operating statewide. Registries keep track of immunization records as children move or change doctors within the state. California's size and mobile population make establishing an integrated statewide registry system all the more important.

ISSUE: Local Control of Death Certificate Fee.

POSITION: Legislation allowing County Boards of Supervisors to increase the fee for a certified copy of a death certificate by up to three dollars (\$3) with the funds being designated locally to support programs for frail and at-risk seniors.

BACKGROUND: It is projected that Riverside County will experience a 59 percent growth rate in its 60+ population within the next 15 years. The older adults (85 years of age plus) are the most rapidly growing segment of that population. These are the individuals at the greatest risk of becoming frail and dependent upon health and community based services. In addition, approximately 13 percent of seniors in Riverside County live at or below the poverty level and thousands more are just above the poverty level. Public funding for senior programs is not keeping pace with this growth, resulting in increasing demand for services. For example, Riverside County has experienced over 350 individuals on a waiting list for home delivered meals.

Precedent has been set for increasing certificate and license fees. Recent state legislative action allows increased fees for certified copies of birth certificated to be earmarked for use in children's programs. Alameda and Solano Counties were allowed to increase marriage license fees earmarked for local domestic violence programs (Signed by the Governor in 2004). Increased fees were allowed on specified real estate documents recordings earmarked for use in real estate fraud prosecution. A recording fee on real estate instruments earmarked for use for Elder and Dependent Adult Financial Abuse Prevention.

ISSUE: Design-Build Construction Method.

POSITION: Support or sponsor legislation that would enable Riverside County to use design-build construction methods.

BACKGROUND: Design-Build is a system of contracting under which one entity performs both architecture/engineering and construction under one single contract. A number of local jurisdictions have been granted the ability to use design-build methods for construction in recent years. Benefits of utilizing the design-build approach include:

Singular Responsibility - With both design and construction in the hands of a single entity, there is a single point of responsibility for quality, cost and schedule adherence.

Quality - The singularized responsibility inherent in design-build serves as a motivation for quality and proper project performance. Requirements and expectations are documented in performance terms and it is the design-build entity's responsibility to produce results accordingly.

Cost Savings - Design and construction personnel, working and communicating as a team, evaluate alternative materials and methods efficiently and accurately. Value engineering and constructability are utilized continuously and more effectively when the designers and contractors work as one team during the entire design process.

Time Savings - Because design and construction are overlapped, and because bidding periods and redesign are eliminated, total design and construction time can be significantly reduced.

Early Knowledge of Firm Costs - Guaranteed construction costs are known far earlier than in other delivery systems. The entity responsible for design is simultaneously estimating construction costs and can accurately conceptualize the completed project. Staged contracting for design-build services affords one or more "go, no-go" decision points during design. The decision to proceed with the project is made before substantial design expenditure and with firm knowledge of the final cost.

ISSUE: Wild Burros.

POSITION: Support legislation to empower local jurisdictions to act on and deal with wild burro herds.

BACKGROUND: There are approximately 40 to 60 undomesticated Burros living in the County of Riverside in various areas including local city jurisdictions. Many of the areas that these burro herds use as regular grazing and trails cross over busy municipal streets and thoroughfares. There is no national forest land where these burros roam so they do not fall under the Federal Wild Horse and Burro Act. Although there is plenty of undeveloped area in the hills, the burros prefer to hang out on the outskirts of civilization because citizens provide food and water for them there. Due to this herd movement there have been several vehicle accidents including at least one fatality. Although many animal control agencies as well as the California State Fish and Game Department have been called to mitigate the situations that occur surrounding these burros, the California State Fish and Game Code section 4600 states that it is illegal to kill wound, capture or have in possession any undomesticated burro. Due to this current state law, there is no agency that has the authority to act in an attempt to solve the problems that occur.

As a result, jurisdictions throughout the State that are faced with wild burro herd encroachment are not left with the ability to act. The intent of this legislation will be to empower local jurisdictions with the authority to deal with these herds. Programs such as relocation and regular herd management will fall under whatever locality the herd is in.

Fiscal impact would fall to the jurisdiction that the burro herd is in and will vary with whatever method is used to manage the herd. Many Counties and Cities have already established predator or wildlife control programs in place. A herd management method such as sterilization would have a short term up front cost which in the long term would reduce the burden on the system and the associated costs to maintain the herd.

California State Fish and Game Code section 4600 states that it is illegal to kill wound, capture or have in possession any undomesticated burro. The proposed legislation would simply add language which would empower local jurisdictions to act on and deal with the wild burro herds.

ISSUE: Mandatory dog and cat sterilization.

POSITION: Support or sponsor legislation that requires mandatory dog and cat sterilization.

BACKGROUND: The burden to society from the millions of surplus dogs and cats is tremendous. Not only are the monetary costs to local jurisdictions at times overwhelming; so too are the physical and emotional tolls relating to the care, sheltering and euthanasia of most of these unwanted pets. Each of the cities and counties has sought to mitigate the problem through increasing adoptions and redemptions and active spay/neuter programs. These strategies have helped but fall far short of a near zero population growth rate and will not on their own solve the problem.

As a result, many cities and counties throughout the State are contemplating the adoption of mandatory spay/neuter legislation. The issue is complex especially since the animals do not recognize political jurisdictions and county legislation may not be adopted by all the cities within a county. State-wide requirements are needed to 'level the playing field' and to relieve each individual jurisdiction from having to process separate legislative approaches. The Hayden Bill and the Vincent Bill are successful examples of State wide legislation within the animal welfare field. A concerted State wide approach, adding this one additional tool, may be the most effective segment of a multi-factorial approach to animal population management.

State law requires rabies vaccination and licensure for dogs at four months of age. The proposed legislation would simply add (with some exemptions) the sterilization requirement. Cats should be sterilized in the same timeframe. Eventually, it is anticipated that felines may be held to the same vaccination and licensing requirements as dogs because the risk of rabies transmission is actually greater from cats; due to the greater frequency of human bites.

Short term costs associated with surgical sterilization may impact the pet owner but many organizations are active within the field and provide low/no cost alternatives for surgeries. Many counties and cities have already established voucher programs to assist the public to obtain surgical services as well. In the long term, it is anticipated that fewer stray animals will become impounded; thereby reducing the burden on the systems and the associated costs.

ISSUE: Support for Establishing Additional Laboratory Response Network (LRN) Level B (Reference) Public Health Laboratories.

POSITION: Support State Legislation which would allow the creation of additional LRN Level B (Reference) Laboratories or allow the release of Reference Laboratory procedures and reagents to designated Public Health Laboratories who have the technical expertise, facility, and equipment to perform such testing.

BACKGROUND: The LRN was established in order to create a network of laboratories to adequately respond to the threat of bioterrorism or any other health hazards. Laboratories range from local Level A clinical laboratories to Level D Federal research laboratories. There are currently 14 Level B County Public Health Laboratories in California; however that number is insufficient for the needs of the state. While additional Level B laboratories are needed, this designation has been withheld. This restriction severely impacts the ability to conduct confirmatory testing for potential bioterrorism agents. Referring such testing to other Level B laboratories delays the receipt of important laboratory results. Expanding the number of Level B laboratories appropriately will allow our public health agencies to respond faster to potential bioterrorism concerns.

- ISSUE:** Older Californians Act Programs.
- POSITION:** Maintain existing state funding for home and community based services, and pursue restoration of recent cuts in funding for Older Californians Act programs.
- BACKGROUND:** The Older Californian Act states that the state shall ensure that health and social services are available to allow older individuals to live independently at home or with others. Key community based services provided for in the Act include: Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP), Alzheimer's Day Care Centers, Brown Bag Program, Foster Grandparent Program, Linkages Case Management Program, Respite Care Program, Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), and Ombudsman Program. These programs have experienced cuts or flat funding over the years and are not keeping pace with inflation or population growth. Services are essential components of a home and community based care system, and often prevent more costly institutionalization.

- ISSUE:** Protection of State Funding for County Administered Programs.
- POSITION:** Support legislation that protects state funding for county administered programs. Oppose legislation that shifts funding to state mandated programs to local government.
- BACKGROUND:** Annually a significant portion of spending reductions proposed at the state level are in health and service programs administered by the county, but funded by the state. By reducing funding for these programs, the state is essentially shifting the funding responsibility to the county. The state also funds, or partially funds, a number of other state programs administered by the county which frequently are proposed for reductions in state funding. State mandated programs should be funded by the state.

ISSUE: Protect Funding and Services for Women's Health.

POSITION: Continue to support policy for women's health services that encourage early and continuous prenatal care; support substance abuse screening, access, referral and treatment during pregnancy; screening and treatment for STD; screening and treatment for cancer; reducing teen pregnancy and preventing unintended pregnancy.

Continue support of the Family PACT funding for California which provides access to health care for low income women so they can receive the services including STD screening and treatment, cancer screening for cervical and breast and birth control.

Continue to support education targeting teen pregnancy prevention.

BACKGROUND: It is essential for good public health that women's health issues are addressed early on. The consequences of inadequate prenatal care, lack of early screening and treatment for STD and cancer, teen pregnancy and unintended pregnancy contributes to a host of preventable health and social problems for women and families.

In the area of prenatal care, there are a number of federal, state and local programs focusing on the need for early and continuous prenatal care. Early prenatal care reduces maternal mortality and morbidity (i.e. gestational diabetes, STDs) by identifying complications earlier and identifying fetal abnormalities before birth so interventions can be anticipated and parents can prepare for special needs. In addition the Community Health Agency is working on a community collaborative to address screening, assessment, referral and treatment of substance abuse during pregnancy which is anticipated to improve both the health of the mother and the infant as well as the family. Providing these services and continuing outreach in these areas will lower costs for preventive illness in infants and children.

Preventative health services for low income women are limited at best. The major source of funded health care is through the Family PACT program which provides screening for cervical and breast cancer, screening and treatment for STD, stresses the importance of early prenatal care, and provides birth control. In addition, the availability of these services and outreach is needed to address teen pregnancy and unintended pregnancy. California overall has made great strides in reducing teen pregnancy. It is predicted that the number of teens will increase significantly over the next several years. Therefore it is imperative that we continue to address teen pregnancy.

If attention to the prevention of teen pregnancy is diminished or lost, the consequences will be disastrous. There have been legislative proposals to limit access and funding for Screening and Treatment for STD and cancer screening in the State Family PACT Program. Limitations or restrictions on access to services will negatively impact these essential services for our residents.

ISSUE: Extension of Time to Expend Proposition 40 River Parkways Grant Funds.

POSITION: Sponsor legislation or seek administrative action to extend the time to expend Proposition 40 River Parkway grant funds.

BACKGROUND: Due to unforeseen design issues with the Santa Ana River Trail and Parkway, an extension of time on expending Proposition 40 River Parkways grant funds is required. Provisions exist under the grant guidelines to request this extension.